

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method is provided for correcting rule violating areas of a photomask using a digital representation of the photomask. The method includes identifying violating areas of the photomask from a digital representation of the photomask. The violating areas include areas that violate a minimum width rule and/or areas that violate a minimum space rule for the photomask. The violating areas are then manipulated for the purpose of eliminating the violating areas. They are manipulated differently based on whether the violating area lies inside a design shape of a layout pattern to be imaged using the photomask and/or whether the violating area lies outside the design shape.

429632\_1